



The R. A. M. Club Magazine.

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Fifty Years of Pianoforte Playing,

BY OSCAR BERINGER.

(Being extracts from two Lectures delivered at the Royal Academy of Music on February 6th and 13th, 1907.)

I must apologize for letting off a little of the steam of vanity with which most musicians are charged, but whatever other sins I may have I am not going to add to them by rushing into print with a volume of reminiscences. Concerning my early concert pieces, Thalberg's "Home, sweet home" was really the last straw, which, however, did not break this camel's back. Lessons were then of a perfunctory character, and I learned more from listening to the prominent pianists of the day. The methods of even the best teachers were primitive. The pupil was either praised to

the skies or told to have more practice. The latter meant an hour's scales a day and Czerny's Studies to be taken as many times a day as the poor pupil could stand. Looking back to that time, I now envy the young pupil of the present day, who has the opportunity of being trained from the beginning. In those days I had to pick up the crumbs where I could. There was no L.R.A.M., no A.R.C.M., or even Associated Board to disturb our slumbers and injure our digestions. There is a story of two sisters going for a music lesson. Their professor was rather somnolent, and they arranged that when the first girl had finished, she was to leave quietly and the other would take her place at the piano at once. Towards the end of the second lesson the professor woke up and said, "That is very good, now go and bring your sister." The girl replied, "Please, I am the sister."

Sir August Manns took a great part in encouraging contemporary English composers. No man did more for music than August Manns. When I was a boy prodigy playing at the Crystal Palace, Madame Titiens happened to say in my hearing that she was very thirsty. I jumped up and got her a glass of water, and she, seeing a small boy in a short jacket, thought that half-a-crown would be acceptable. When it was offered I drew myself up to my full 4-foot 2, and said in a voice quivering with outraged dignity, "No, thank you. I am the solo pianist of the Crystal Palace." I was still further hurt when Madame Titiens laughed, and even a kiss from her did not quite heal my wounded pride.

Of the pieces that were not in the keys of F or G, perhaps two-thirds were written in E flat at that time. One of the most famous was Brinley Richards' "Warblings at Eve." There was a companion piece, "Warblings at Dawn." Every pianoforte composer who could—and a great many who couldn't—at that time wrote a Tarantella or Gavotte. Sydney Smith's first success was a Tarantella. Sydney Smith had a knack of writing apparently brilliant pieces which were comparatively easy to play. Thalberg, the other popular composer of the time, wrote more difficult pieces, and had finer musicianship. Another composer of quite a different calibre who gained popularity was Stephen Heller, a Hungarian living in Paris. His music was introduced into England by Hallé. He achieved success through a Tarantella. Although Heller's larger works were now forgotten, some of his smaller works were played even at the present day. A feature of these early days was a boom in gavottes. Publishers looked for them high and low, and any that were non-copyright were, of course, seized upon. The important discovery was made that Bach had written gavottes. A lady who wanted "more of these charming gavottes" asked a musicseller "if Mr. Bach had been writing any more," and received the reply, rather well-known now,

"No, madam, Mr. Bach is no longer composing, he is decomposing."

A great part was played by Arabella Goddard and her husband, Mr. J. W. Davison, the *Times* critic, in the fifties. Any composer who showed the slightest modernizing tendency, no matter how desirable the improvement might be, was cut to ribbons by the newspaper critics, led by Davison. "If you want to know how not to play the piano, go and hear Rubinstein," it was said. Arabella Goddard reigned supreme for a time. Thalberg was lucky enough to receive fair treatment as a performer, and his compositions had enormous success. He was the first to touch upon questions in regard to cantabile playing. In the preface to his work, "The Art of Singing applied to Pianoforte Playing," he says, "The performer must subject the mechanism of his instrument to his art. The hands must not be lifted too high. The player must always listen to himself, and judge his own performances. Players work too much with their fingers, and too little with their intelligence," and so on. Thalberg was a tall, handsome aristocratic-looking man, invariably kind and courteous. He sat quite unmoved at the piano, had an exquisite touch and unfailing technique, but one could never become enthusiastic in listening to him. His clear part-playing of Bach was a good lesson. Beethoven he made uninteresting, while with Schumann he did not appear to have the slightest affinity.

Alfred Jaell was an exceedingly stout man. He had to sit at a considerable distance from the keyboard, and he looked like a cat scratching the keys, but he was an amiable cat, that never showed its claws. Pachmann is the nearest approach to Jaell. Public taste was improving, and people began to form their own opinions in spite of the hostile press.

I used to turn over for Madame Schumann. She used to play from notes even when playing her husband's compositions. I never saw any artist more completely wrapped up in her art. Her appearance was that of absolute absorption. She never thought of herself. Her whole soul was steeped in the work she was playing. There was never the smallest suspicion of self-display; never the slightest departure from the text. In fact she was the classical pianist *par excellence*. She always held her fingers quite close to the keyboard, and gave the impression of kneading the keys. She played octaves in the modern way with loose wrist, and by fall of the hand, not a blow, though she had the fault of arpeggiating her chords.

At Leipzig I went to the institution modestly called the "music school," and was in Moscheles' class. Of him I have the most pleasant recollections. Moscheles was short of stature, and had a distinctly Jewish cast of countenance. His hands were excellent pianoforte hands, broad and muscular. His finger technique was

excellent,* but he played everything with a rigid wrist and arm, consequently his playing was rather heavy. He was fond of rhythmical accentuation, and made a great point of the strictest adherence to time. He always refused to play Chopin, on the ground that he was unable to play out of time. His favourite composers were Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn, and—Moscheles. His studies will live for a long time. His compositions were a great advance on Hummel; his harmonies were more modern, and his melodies had a greater depth. I spent many pleasant Sunday afternoons with Moscheles, who had at an earlier period resided for 20 years in England. Some of Moscheles' English experiences were distinctly funny. He once had to give lessons to two daughters of an Earl, and, when he rang the visitors' bell, was ordered by the flunkey to go in at the servants' door. Later he had to get payment for the lessons by instalments. As a teacher Moscheles was most painstaking and patient. His pupils learned much from him about accentuation. He was once illustrating to his class how to play staccato, and taking his gold pencil he said, "If this were a red hot poker, you would touch it with your finger lightly and quickly." An American student, who was listening, said, "Herr Professor, if it were a red hot poker I guess I wouldn't touch it at all."

Ferdinand David had a most violent temper. Many times have I seen the music thrown to the opposite side of the room when a pupil displeased him, but one who did really well received corresponding praise. Another of my teachers was Reinecke. Last year I called on him at Leipzig and found him at his desk composing. Although now 83 years of age, this delightful old fellow is still very active. Reinecke remarked that the "Meistersinger" was the finest libretto that was ever written for music, and regretted that he had not had it to set, for he would have written very different music. That was true enough. None of his compositions lacked merit, and they were all free from vulgarity.

Finding touch and technique, two important points, ignored by the professors at the conservatoire, I looked round for instruction on these points, and had private lessons from Louis Plaidy, the greatest master of technique and touch. Curiously enough Plaidy did not realize that continuance of pressure after tone production on the keyboard was a waste of force. Many thousand copies of his book were sold. He advocated that C major fingering should be retained throughout in all keys, and thus to him is due the credit of initiating our modern fingering.

People might say that I could have had just as good instruction in London. Possibly so, but there was a wonderful musical atmosphere at Leipzig. It was the musical centre of Europe at that time, and a student was literally saturated with music, at the Gewandhaus concerts and the opera, an excellent one, to the

stalls of which the students were admitted for *good*. There were no backs to these stalls. When the Franco-German war broke out it was thought it would last a long time, and I decided to come back to England; a step which I have never regretted.

The Latest Phases of Music.

The above was the title of two lectures, delivered at the Royal Institution on January 14th and 26th, by Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

He said that 40 years ago Sir George Macfarren delivered six learned and highly technical lectures on harmony, which had been preceded and were followed by a long and pedantic discussion of the new-fangled doctrines, for the teaching of which Sir George had been dismissed from his position at the Royal Academy of Music. The sturdy revolutionary, who was his predecessor in the Principal's chair, stood to his guns, fired his last shot, and immediately after he had concluded his six lectures he was reinstated, and his views were now generally accepted and formed the basis of the majority of the textbooks on music. Modern musicians had learnt that systems of harmony were not gospel but only phenomena, which enabled the principles of the art to be fixed. The effects produced by fifths and octaves and false relations, behaving as unpleasantly in music as in social life, which by a confusion of tonality produced the effect of being in two keys at once, were now very much in vogue, while French composers had lately advanced to the stage of writing music in which chords never hitherto known and other combinations of notes which had little or no relationship produced the most ludicrous effects. Either as a joke or as an experiment Mozart had invented discords, and so had Beethoven, while in the present day one of the leading modern composers frequently made use of a succession of dissonant chords which resulted in a mere jumble of cacophonous sound, though his compositions contained occasional passages of great beauty and power. Where could there be found a more hideous combination of sound than in the orgy of clashing intended to be descriptive of a battle, where artistic restraint had been discarded in the striving after sensational and realistic effect?

The chief forces which have influenced modern music, Sir Alexander said were these: (1) The Romanticists; (2) the advent of programme music; (3) Berlioz, from whom were to be dated several points of departure that were still being exploited; (4) Liszt, with his new form, the Symphonic Poem and his Rhapsodies, full of fresh turns and surprising advances in the technique of the art; and (5) the commanding figure of Wagner, whose operas, in their sequence, were themselves an example of individual development equalled only by that of the great Beethoven himself. One essential point to note about modern music was that it was not any more based upon diatonic consonances, plus a reserve fund of chromatics with which to emphasise the high lights and the dramatic or emotional expression; but it practically was built upon chromatic dissonances. This was nothing but a reversal of the old order, and when it was kept in mind, the

more recent developments were easy enough to follow, since out of this fundamental fact chiefly arose the radical changes in harmonic sequences and part-writing and other departures. Another point to be marked in modern composition was the decrease in the production of abstract or absolute music. Abstract and programme music had been running side by side for many years, but the prevalent tendency was almost universally in favour of imaginative work. He had seen modern music described as being in a fluid state, and the expression was perhaps not too far-fetched. Much that had lately been written about it by the essayists was also in the same state of fluidity, and the general verdict of those who cultivated the prophetic habit was the usually fairly safe one that its ultimate destination lay in the lap of the gods. Certainly the very latest consignment of musical nuts was hard to crack. That which annoyed and distressed the ear of one generation, however, might merely more or less pleasantly tickle those of the next; and the novel harmonic progressions or solid lumps of dissonance considered outrageous to-day might probably be received with equanimity a month or two hence. From this point Sir Alexander set out on a rapid analytical review of the writings of Richard Strauss, whom he described as "a modern of the moderns, who drives his musical motor at breakneck speed, disdainful of all police traps." The development of the composer's style in his songs was first illustrated and his later harmonic style freely criticised and later on his chief instrumental compositions were analytically discussed, his tone poems being described as practically a compendium of the characteristics of the modern movement, upon which their composer has exercised a greater influence than any other. After speaking of the Domestic Symphony, Sir Alexander observed that it was not easy to reconcile the possession of undoubtedly great gifts, exceptional polyphonic skill, and genius for instrumental colour with the singular choice of either impossible or puerile subjects for their inspiration, or the exploitation of merely stunning orchestral uproar, the heaping of one disconcerting discord upon another, and to believe in the artistic sincerity of the conflicting results produced by their combination. The opera of "Salome" Sir Alexander characterised as an exhibition of bad art and questionable taste, as "teeming with musical exaggerations of the most disgusting and repulsive kind," and as "a great desert of the most hideous combinations of sound ever put on paper."

Turning his attention to Max Reger, to the consideration of whose works the concluding portion of the lecture was devoted, Sir Alexander described that composer as an offshoot from Strauss and an excellent example of the process popularly known as "going one better." Though Max Reger's writings had not either the intention, the force, the colour, or the animal spirits of Strauss' work, they represented an interesting phase of music, as revealing the art stripped not only of its last remaining principles, but of at least two of its vital characteristics—melody and rhythm. What remained was a monotonous and featureless product. If they could imagine such a thing as "sterilised" music—music without emotion or expression—they had it here.

In his second lecture, Sir Alexander devoted his attention to the modern French School. He said to the cultured sway and the personal training of the Belgian, César Franck, born in 1822, they might trace the most representative French music of the hour. Franck revealed a style which was an interesting combination of high

ideals and novel harmonic treatment, graceful without exaggeration, and in his later and sacred works exhibiting much placid and dignified sincerity. His pupils and immediate followers had sub-divided themselves into several groups, each having its own representative and acknowledged leader. There was a small section which might be called purely Franckian, retaining his classical leanings and exhibiting much technical skill, with his modern proclivities intensified and emphasised. One might fairly attach the name of Paul Dukas to this offshoot. Then came the more pronounced and independent branch having for its head Franck's later pupil and close friend Vincent d'Indy. D'Indy had a considerable number of followers, who elected to call themselves the "Diatonic School," but after a study of their works one might only presume that the term "diatonic" was used in a Pickwickian sense. It was, however, to the Impressionists that they must look to find the very latest phases of music, since their methods, besides showing what one might think were the last conceivable results producible by a complete and final breaking-away from the restraints of even the most liberal modifications of the laws of harmony and form, professed also a definite purpose in so doing—that was, if the word "definite" was applicable to a phase which was avowedly and intentionally vague. With the exception of a not very considerable quantity of chamber music, they were producing little so-called "abstract music." It was chiefly called into being by the observation of the clouds, of special lights, or by the perfume of flowers, the gambols of satyrs and fauns, the sounds of bells, the voices of birds. Its tendencies were perhaps better described in the words of its best-known representative, Debussy, in a note to some of his own pianoforte pieces, when he said he was aiming at "Movement, rhythm, dancing in the atmosphere, with bursts of brusque lights—luminous dust participating in total rhythms." The latter half of the sentence was occult. Perhaps the luminous dust was intended to get into their eyes as well as their ears. In its extremest and most recent manifestations, almost unknown here, the most striking points of this music were these: First, it was the rarest thing to meet with any detached or independently-struck chords. They were only shifting harmonic progressions moving about in the most unlikely and, of course, unscientific sort of way. Next, there were seldom or never any moments of either repose or contrast, or any real polyphonic invention or independent contrapuntal passages. Nor could the themes be said to be subject to any development. While readily admitting the bewildering ingenuity of these harmonic twistings and sometimes ear-torturing progressions, as well as crediting both the Diatonics and the Impressionists with having developed a system of composition utterly unlike any other, both in manner and effect, the outcome of it all, as a whole, left one unsatisfied and empty as Shacabac after the Barmecide's feast. Considered as a School, it was dangerous to its disciples, inasmuch as its obvious limitations admitted of very little scope for individuality or the impression of much or any personal stamp. The new movement in music had somewhat upset their preconceived idea of national characteristics, for while the large company of French composers who professed it seemed to be taking themselves very gravely and seriously, the two Germans cited in the previous lecture might be half-suspected of a furtive chuckle at the solemnity with which their recent exploits had been received, and the

number of noisy followers they had gathered in their train. Their Realism assailed the ear roughly and with much unpleasant vigour, while the Impressionists' freaks moved more slowly and creepily. But the quest of the beautiful seemed scarcely to be the main object in either case. To what all these strange and artful experiments in iconoclasm were destined to lead was not easily observable. To imagine that the art would ever revert to a state of Mozartian or even an artificial kind of simplicity after all it had acquired to itself through the long succession of the masters was as unreasonable as to think that this lawless and boneless system of composition was likely to remain permanent. For it was difficult to agree with the constantly-repeated statement that this climax of extremism, clever though it were, was a logical development of what had gone before. One failed to see how a complete and final repudiation could in any sense be called so,—a devolution, a negation, if they liked, but hardly a development. On the contrary, might they not be justified in suggesting that, as this latest phase was by this time a distinctly separate and detached art, which, having isolated itself from the main body, so to speak, should find a new designation for itself—Litera-chromomusic—what they would? It was said, too, that this was the harmonic age of music, and that the next phase would show the further exploitation of rhythm—perhaps of other modes, besides the ordinary major and minor, now chiefly in use. If the age of thematic invention were in sight it would be more welcome than any other. For, after all, the very apparent lack of healthy and really great thematic ideas was the cause, the weakness, which induced and invited most of these trial trips into rather unlovely regions. Be that as it might, it was fairly certain that many of the distinguishing qualities and tendencies of this new art were very much in opposition to our own national character; and whilst one might appreciate its temperamental, imaginative, and idealistic proclivities, the cultivation of which must always make for progress, there was much in the exotic which was not a desirable importation into our own music, and could hardly be recommended for imitation or acquirement on the part of our younger writers or our future musicians.

Vocal and instrumental illustrations were contributed by Miss Aileen Hodgson, Miss Ethel Lister, Miss Myra Hess, Mr. York Bowen, and a quartet party consisting of Messrs. Rowsby Woof, H. O. Parsons, James Lockyer, and Bertram O'Donnell, Mr. Hubert Bath being the accompanist.

National "Schools."

BY THE LATE SIR G. A. MACFARREN.

I have heard attention called to the classification of schools of music, and the probability of forming a school, and the elements necessary to this end. It is as curious as it is interesting to note in musical history how one school has melted into another, and that the most striking peculiarities of one school, or one nationality, have been the product of external influences. In the earliest days of musical art England held high supremacy, both in technical acquirement and



THOMAS THRELFALL.

BORN DECEMBER 31ST, 1842.

DIED FEBRUARY 3RD, 1907.

in mental facility, and the early productions of English Masters certainly stand on a high level, if not the foremost level, of the musical history of their time. It was at the dawn of the sixteenth century that music in Flanders began to gain pre-eminence. The Flemings and several Englishmen went to Rome, and it is from their teachings that the very famous Roman school took its rise. Flemings at the same time went to Naples and to Venice and established there conservatoires. Now, the early Italian school ranks at the very summit of general judgment, but yet we find it took its rise from another nationality. Having risen, the so-called Roman school diffused its characteristics abroad. The most scrupulous and exacting analysts of the music of Bach trace all his principle of form to the influence of his study of Italian music; and these Italian models have been the groundwork of plan in the works of all the greatest masters.

Now-a-days (1883) we perceive some distinction between German and Italian, between both and French music; that a more grave feeling is endeavoured to be expressed by the German muse through the complicated means which are not for the most part employed by Italian masters; but when we retrace the course of centuries we find that the greatest of all complications of part-writing and contrapuntal contrivances existed in the Italian school. It is more the province of Italian music to leave to the impulse of the executant the unfolding of musical expression, whereas with the German writers expression is more concentrated in the music itself. Hence the different task of the executant, when his pliable talent befits itself to either of those styles. His own imagination has almost unrestricted range in the music of Italy; in the music of Germany he has the severer and not less honourable duty of moulding his powers in the matrix of another's creation, and, under restraint on all sides, to move with an air of freedom, drawing life from that which he animates. The French style of music is marked by a strong peculiarity and variety of rhythm, let us not say founded on the national love of dancing, but certainly not apart from it in its effect. Let us again note that music in France took its rise from the influence of the Italian Lulli, who went as a boy to France to become the founder of the French school. His birth-place was foreign, his art and influence must have been of Florence. Not only in that very outset of the French musical school, but prominent in the history of French music, have been the notable Italians, Paër, Cherubini, and Rossini. It would seem that climate and surrounding national influences affect style, because all these masters show marked modifications of style in the progress of their careers while they dwelt and worked in France. The music of Rossini written in France differs widely in character from the writing of the same master before he made that land his residence, and the like may be traced with others.

Our English school ranked highly of old. It has been the custom to ascribe to the influence of the Puritans in England the decadence of the art among us, but, from all I can trace of history, that is a false view. Thus it never stood higher here than during the period of the Commonwealth. Many circumstances may be quoted to show that the actions of the Puritans had an impulsive effect upon those who entertained different views upon the serious grounds of religion, induced them to stronger effort for the maintenance of those qualities of beauty which their views allowed them to enjoy. It was at the

close of the Commonwealth period that Purcell rose upon musical history, who is as much an honour to our land as to our art, and is as great a subject of pride to any musician as is any man who has laboured in the cause of music. Truly, it was the accession of the House of Hanover and the large influx of foreigners who constituted the Court of those first Hanoverian Kings that induced a tangent in the course of our musical history. It is to be hoped that this eccentricity of orbit has now taken a direct turn, and that music is regaining its ancient eminence in public esteem and in general study.

A school of music for the most part is built upon the peculiarities, the characteristic efforts of one individual—not in copying, perhaps, but in avoiding what he has done. Then let us hope that with the advancing tide of musical education some English genius may arise who may establish the basis of a school that is to render our country as notable in the future as it was in the past.

Club Doings.

A Social Meeting (Ladies' Night) was held in the Concert Room of the Royal Academy of Music on Saturday, 16th March, 1907. The President, Mr. Oscar Beringer, received the guests from 8 to 8.30 p.m. On this occasion, the Committee had decided that the programme should be non-musical, and had engaged Mr. Percy French to give an entertainment. It was possibly somewhat daring to risk a "one-man show" but Mr. French is so versatile that the experiment was justified, his clever drawings and refined humour creating much amusement. His method of drawing animals by the sound of their voices was highly ingenious, while the pictures in coloured crayons that he executed before the audience were equally successful when he turned them upside down. Mr. French certainly did not allow his audience to become dull. There were 72 present.

Suppers have been held at the Restaurant d'Italie, Old Compton Street, W., on Saturday, 16th February, and Tuesday, 7th May.

News about Members.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie's new Violin Suite in E, op. 68, was played in public for the first time by Mischa Elman at the London Symphony Concert on February 18th, and has since been heard at Bournemouth (when Mr. Hans Wessely was the soloist) and elsewhere.

Owing to illness, Dr. Joachim's visit to London had to be postponed, but it is hoped that the eminent violinist will be well enough to come over next month.

The programme for the next Leeds Festival will include a new composition "Sea Wanderers," by Mr. Granville Bantock, the second part of whose "Omar Khayyam" will be given at the Cardiff Festival.

An illustrated account of Mr. Allen Gill and his work appeared in the March number of the *Musical Journal*.

At the Bournemouth Symphony Concert on March 7th, Sir Alexander Mackenzie's "La Belle Dame sans Merci" and the "Cricket on the Hearth" Overture were performed.

Mr. Granville Bantock will be one of the adjudicators at the next Welsh Eisteddfod.

On the 13th March, Dr. Greenish received a solid silver salver, inscribed with his initials and the date 1882—1907, and accompanied by a card containing the following:—"To Dr. Arthur J. Greenish, from the Rev. G. A. and Mrs. Herklots, in grateful recognition of twenty-five years' devoted service as Organist and Choirmaster of St. Saviour's, South Hampstead."

Mr. Reginald Steggall's second Orchestral Suite was performed at the Bournemouth Winter Gardens on April 8th.

Mrs. J. R. Blazey has been the recipient of an afternoon tea service with the following inscription:—"Presented to Mrs. J. R. Blazey, A.T.C.L., by the Board of Trinity College of Music, in appreciation of her services as Hon. Accompanist to the Choir during ten years, 1897—1907."

The pupils of Mr. Stephen Kemp at the Guildhall School of Music gave a Pianoforte Recital on March 22nd.

Mr. W. W. Starmer conducted a performance of "The Dream of Gerontius," by the Tunbridge Wells Vocal Association on March 19th; on which occasion Mr. Frederick Ranalow was one of the soloists. This was the first performance of the work in Tunbridge Wells.

A new light Opera "Tom Jones," by Mr. Edward German, was produced on March 30th at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, the composer conducting the first performance. The Opera has since been transferred to the Apollo Theatre, London.

Pupils of Mr. Tobias Matthay's Pianoforte School gave a "Concerto Evening" at Bloomsbury Hall on March 19th. The String Orchestra on the occasion was conducted by Mr. Cuthbert Whitmore.

A copy of Miss Margaret Gyde's "Norwegian Suite" for violin and piano has been accepted by H.M. the Queen of Norway.

Congratulations to Mr. Stanley Hawley, Mr. W. W. Starmer and Mr. York Bowen on their election as Fellows of the Royal Academy of Music.

Mr. G. Dorrington Cunningham gave a Pianoforte Recital at the Muswell Hill Athenæum on February 11th.

The Wessely Quartet gave a Concert in the Bechstein Hall on February 6th.

Mr. Ffrangcon Davies lectured on "Art and Life" at Cardiff, in February.

The members of Mr. Tobias Matthay's class at the Royal Academy of Music gave a private Pianoforte Recital in the Bloomsbury Hall on February 27th.

The pupils of the Misses Gertrude and Edith Byford gave a Concert in the Shire Hall, Chelmsford, on April 15th, on behalf of the Children's Country Holiday Fund.

A portrait and biography of Mr. W. W. Starmer were given in the *Musical Herald* for May.

On May 16th, Mr. Herbert Lake started for Australia where he is going to examine for the Associated Board. He expects to be back by the end of the year.

It is with regret that we announce that Mr. Myles B. Foster has

been seriously ill. He is now better, but has been ordered complete rest for some time. His many friends both in the Club and out of it will wish him a speedy restoration to health.

As will be seen from the Academy Letter, Mr. Ernest Cooper has been elected the successor to the late Mr. Threlfall as Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Royal Academy of Music, and is succeeded as Hon. Treasurer of the Institution by Mr. Charles Rube. Both these gentlemen are members of our Club.

Obituary.

SIR BENJAMIN BAKER.

We regret to announce the death of Sir Benjamin Baker which occurred from syncope on May 18th, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. This celebrated engineer was trained in a South Wales iron-works, and was subsequently associated with the late Sir John Fowler, in conjunction with whom he carried out very notable undertakings. Perhaps the work most prominently connected with his name is the Forth Bridge, a gigantic and daring work which was begun in 1883 and took seven years to complete. In recognition of the success of his plans, he was created K.C.M.G., in 1890. A later work, even more gigantic though not attended with the same difficulty, was the Nile Dam at Assouan, by means of which the waters of an immense lake a hundred miles in length are stored up so as to irrigate the Delta when the Nile is low. On the opening of this in 1902, Sir Benjamin received a K.C.B. These two works were the outstanding products of a notable career, but he also carried out numerous other projects throughout the extent of the British Empire.

Sir Benjamin Baker among other distinctions had received the Hon. LL.D. of Edinburgh, Hon. D.Sc. of Cambridge, and the Hon. Master of Engineering of Dublin. He was also F.R.S., and a Director of the Royal Academy of Music.

Notice.

The Committee has prepared a brief circular giving particulars of the R.A.M. Club, copies of which may be had of the Secretary on application. It is earnestly requested that each Member and Associate will endeavour, by means of these circulars and otherwise, to induce Ladies and Gentlemen who are eligible to join the Club, and thus help to promote its prosperity by making good those gaps in the Membership which must occur as time goes on.

The Annual Dinner.

Special attention is drawn to the fact that the Annual Dinner will be held on *Wednesday, 10th July*. This alteration is due to the desire of the Committee to secure the presence on the occasion of the President, Mr. Oscar Beringer, who is obliged to leave for South Africa before the date originally fixed.

Organ Recitals.

Mr. Frederick Gostelow at Sturminster Marshall, Wimborne, Jan. 22nd; at Luton Parish Church, Jan. 31st; St. Albans Tabernacle, Feb. 7th and April 18th; Primitive Methodist Church, Luton, March 6th; St. Stephen's, Walbrook, E.C., April 10th; All Saints, Leighton Buzzard, March 3rd.

Mr. Leonard Hart at Horbury Congregational Church, Feb. 21st; at St. Peter's-upon-Cornhill, E.C., Feb. 26th; at St. Mary's, Paddington Green, W., March 14th, and at St. Stephen's, Westbourne Park, W., March 6th, 13th and 20th.

Dr. G. F. Huntley at St. Catherine Cree Church, E.C.

Miss Margaret Kennedy at Christ Church, Constantinople.

New Music.

Farjeon, Harry, "Chant sans Paroles," for pianoforte (Augener, Ltd.)
Tone Pictures, op. 19, for pianoforte "
Two Love-Caprices, for voice ... (Chappell & Co.)

Jervis-Reid, H. V., A Cycle of Three Songs to words by Matthew Arnold ... (Edwin Ashdown, Ltd.)

O'Leary, Arthur, Scène Rustique, for pianoforte ... (Augener, Ltd.)

Our Alma Mater.

An Organ Recital was given in the Concert Room on February 11th. The proceedings opened with a performance of Sir A. C. Mackenzie's Introduction and Funeral March from "Coriolanus," in memory of the late Mr. Thomas Threlfall, played by Mr. Ralph Letts. Other organ solos were rendered by Miss Kathleen Robinson, Miss May Matthews, and Mr. Gilbert J. Ledger. Mr. George Swidenbank played two movements from Elgar's organ sonata in G. Violin solos were given by Messrs. Henry O. Parsons and Urik Tschäikowsky respectively. Miss Winifred Holme sang an excerpt from Saint-Saëns's "Samson and Delilah" in English; Mr. F. Percival Driver gave two songs by Maud Valerie White, while Miss Caroline Hatchard sang three manuscript songs by Mr. Montague F. Phillips. Mr. Ralph Letts concluded (as well as opened) the programme with Liszt's Introduction and Fugue on a Choral.

The Chamber Concert took place in Queen's Hall on February 20th. Miss Myra Hess was associated with Mr. Walter O'Donnell in a performance of Brahms' sonata in E minor for violoncello and pianoforte. Miss Adelaide Dodgson performed d'Albert's F sharp Scherzo, and Mr. Sydney Rosenbloom brought forward a Theme and Variations (MS.) for the pianoforte. Among the vocalists were Miss Edith A. John who gave two songs by Holländer and Reger; Miss Evelyn

Brown who rendered "Von ewiger Liebe" by Brahms; Miss Natalie Campbell, a soprano who sang Handel's "Care Selve"; Mr. Thomas Gibbs who rendered "O Paradis," from Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine," and Mr. McNaughton Duncan, whose choice was Schubert's "Der Erl König." Mr. Urik Tschäikowsky gave a performance of Sarasate's "Zigeunerweisen." Miss Gladys Clark, Miss Elsie Owen, Mr. Thomas Morgan, Miss Gwendolen Griffiths, and Mr. John Mundy, gave two movements from Schubert's Quintet in C (Op. 163). Mr. P. Hughes performed Chopin's Ballade in A flat.

The Orchestral Concert was given in Queen's Hall on March 26th. Mr. Percy A. Bowie (student) brought forward a Scherzo for Orchestra (MS.) The Adagio and Rondo (allegro) from Mozart's Concerto in A for clarinet was performed by Mr. Herbert W. Stutely. The orchestra, under the direction of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, opened the concert with the "Marche Funèbre," from the Principal's "Coriolanus," in memory of Sir August Manns, and closed it with Sullivan's Overture "Di Ballo." Miss Mary Fielding sang Max Bruch's "Ave Maria," and Miss Gwladys Roberts selected the "Hymn to Aphrodite," from Granville Bantock's *Sappho*. Miss Catherine C. Matthews took the solo part in the Romance (Larghetto) and Rondo (Vivace) from Chopin's Pianoforte Concerto in E minor (op. 11). Miss Pitt Soper was heard in the florid air, "Singt dem göttlichen Propheten," from Graun's *Der Tod Jesu*; Miss Audrey Whitaker played Max Bruch's 'cello sollo "Kol Nidrei"; Mr. Hubert Baker sang Mozart's air, "Dalla sera pace," and Miss Elsie Comley played two movements from Dvorák's pianoforte concerto in G, op. 33.

The Dramatic Class gave two performances on the afternoon and evening of May 6th, in the Concert Room. The first part of the programme was a revival of a Terpsichorean Fantasy, "The Moon Slave," given at St. George's Hall some little time ago; Mr. Paul Corder is both the author and the composer of the music. The idea is that a little princess is so passionately addicted to dancing that she must needs go off and dance by herself in a deserted part of the garden. She hears "moon music," and begging for more, offers herself, body and soul, in return. Her request is granted, and she dances to the supernatural strains until at length the *Moon Spirit* appears, and casting a spell over her, finally carries her away bodily. Miss Olive Turner was the *Princess* and Mr. Cecil Pearson was the *Moon Spirit*.

"The Brownie and the Piano Tuner," by Miss L. E. Lomax, treats of the old story of the young man above his station. *Jem Podder*, the piano tuner, is the son of an old Sussex couple, and he is for ever introducing new ideas, with the natural consequence that he upsets the household as well as the Brownies, in which small folk the father and mother stoutly believe. Brownie Tom sweeps the kitchen nightly, and so has become acquainted with the mortals dwelling there. He is greatly attracted by Jim's piano-tuning, but after the latter's treatment of *Avice*, his betrothed, he will have no more to do with him. *Jem*, on leaving the farm, wanders on the Downs, and is captured by the Brownies. He is converted into a Brownie, according to custom, and *Brownie Tom* conceives the idea of turning himself into a mortal and taking *Jem's* place, partly from his fondness for piano-tuning, but mainly on account of *Avice*. He does this, and contrives on his

return to the farm to explain his yesterday's behaviour to the satisfaction of the *Farmer* and *Avice*. One by one the mortal experiences come to him: a hard hat, toothache, and other responsibilities, but he finds that *Avice* makes this mortal life worth living, and despite the appeals of the other Brownies he declines to return to the Brownie life. *Jem Podder* was acted by Mr. Victor de Nevers, while Mr. Cecil Pearson was *Farmer Podder*, a conservative old rustic. Miss Cecil Martin was *Mrs. Podder*, and the part of *Avice* was undertaken at very short notice by Miss Olga Antony. The three *Brownies* were played by the Masters Quaife, de Groot, and Harris. The incidental music to the play was written by Miss Lomax herself. A small orchestra rendered assistance throughout the performances.

Academy Letter.

Mr. Ernest Cooper, Honorary Treasurer of the Academy since 1901, has been elected Chairman of the Committee of Management in succession to the late Mr. Thomas Threlfall. Mr. Charles Rube has undertaken the Honorary Treasurership.

The Principal's new Violin Suite was produced at the Concert given by the London Symphony Orchestra on February 18th, and repeated at the Sunday Concert on May 5th; Mischa Elman being the soloist, and the composer conducting. The work was also played by Mr. Hans Wessely, at Bournemouth on March 7th, under Sir Alexander's direction.

The programme of the Concert given by Dr. Charles E. Harriss, in honour of the visit of the Colonial Premiers, at Queen's Hall on April 16th, included the Principal's "Britannia" Overture, which he conducted.

Mr. Paul Walford Corder has been appointed a Professor of Harmony and Composition.

At the Directors' Meeting held on March 21st the following election took place:—*Honorary Member*, Luigi Denza; *Fellows*, Margaret Cooper, E. York Bowen, Stanley Hawley, Arthur Erskine Newstead; *Associates*, G. Vera Cockburn, Aileen Hodgson and Benjamin J. Dale.

The Organ Recital took place at the Academy on February 11th, and the usual Chamber and Orchestral Concerts were given at Queen's Hall on February 20th and March 26th respectively. On the former occasion Mr. Sydney Rosenbloom played a Theme with Variations for Pianoforte, composed by himself, and on the latter a Scherzo for Orchestra, by Percy A. Bowie, was produced.

A Juvenile Concert was given at the Academy on March 18th.

A dramatic and musical performance, consisting of the "Moon Slave," a Terpsichorean Fantasy, by Paul Corder, and a new Fairy Play "The Brownie and the Piano-Tuner; or, the Piano-Tuner and the Brownie," by L. E. Lomax (student), was given (under the direction of Mr. Richard Temple) on May 6th.

The following awards have been made:—Goldberg Prize, Mary Fielding. Charles Mortimer Prize, Percy Bowie. Sterndale Bennett Prize, Dorothy Grinstead. Louisa Hopkins Memorial Prize, Myra Hess.

Competitions for several Scholarships will take place in September. Those falling vacant are as follows:—Santon-Dolby Scholarship (Singing, Sopranos); Dove Scholarship (Violin); Ross Scholarship (Wind Instruments); Ada Lewis Scholarships (five, various); Orchestral (two, chosen by Committee). The Stainer Exhibition will, as usual, be open to Organ Students entering at the Michaelmas Term. Further particulars may be obtained of Mr. F. W. Renaut.

W.H.

Financial.

1. Subscriptions for the year 1906-7 are now due and should be forwarded to the Secretary, as early as possible. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to the R.A.M. Club and crossed "L. and P. Bank, Sutton."
2. The Bankers of the Club are "The London and Provincial Bank," Sutton, Surrey.
3. If Members so desire they can instruct their own Bankers to pay their Subscriptions when due direct to the Club account.

Future Firtures.

SOCIAL MEETING (Ladies' Night), Saturday, 8th June, 1907, at 8 p.m.

ANNUAL DINNER, Wednesday, 10th July, 1907, at 7.30 p.m.

The above Meetings are liable to alteration, but ample notice will be given. The Social Meetings are held at the Royal Academy of Music.

Notices.

- 1.—"The R.A.M. Club Magazine" is published three times a year, about October, January and May, and is sent gratis to all members and associates on the roll. No copies are sold.
- 2.—Members are asked to kindly forward to the Editor any brief notices relative to themselves for record in the Magazine.
- 3.—New Publications by members are chronicled but not reviewed.
- 4.—All notices, &c., relative to the Magazine should be sent to the Secretary, Mr. J. Percy Baker, Wilton House, Longley Road, Tooting Graveney, S.W.

By order of the Committee.